

CHAPTER 25:
PRETEND FRIENDS

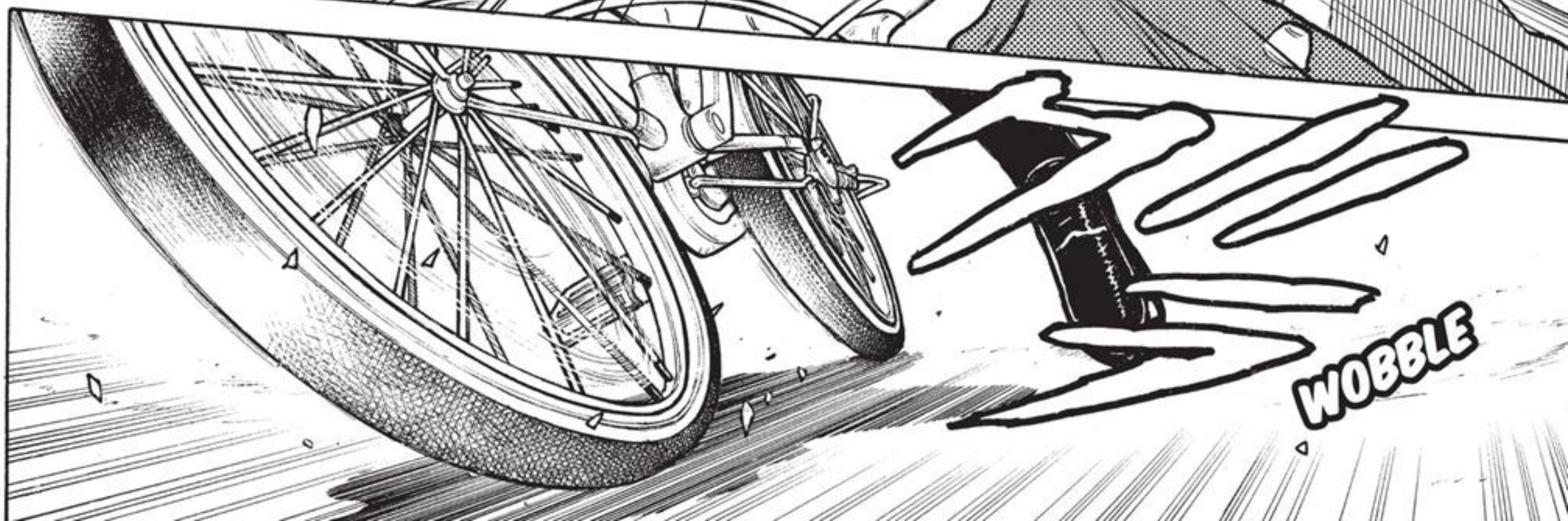
ZOOM

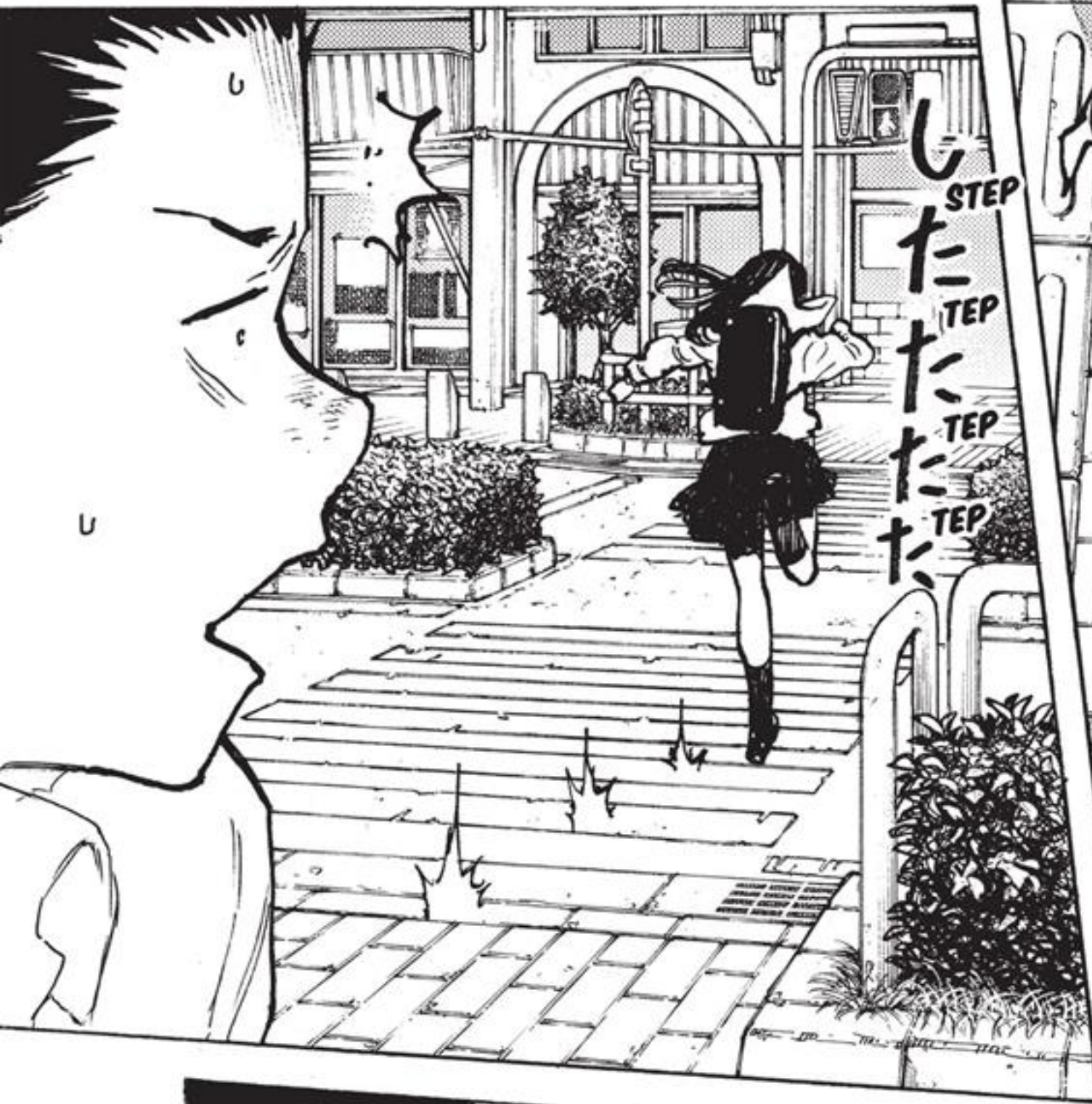
STOP.

COME
ON,
STOP!

ZOOM

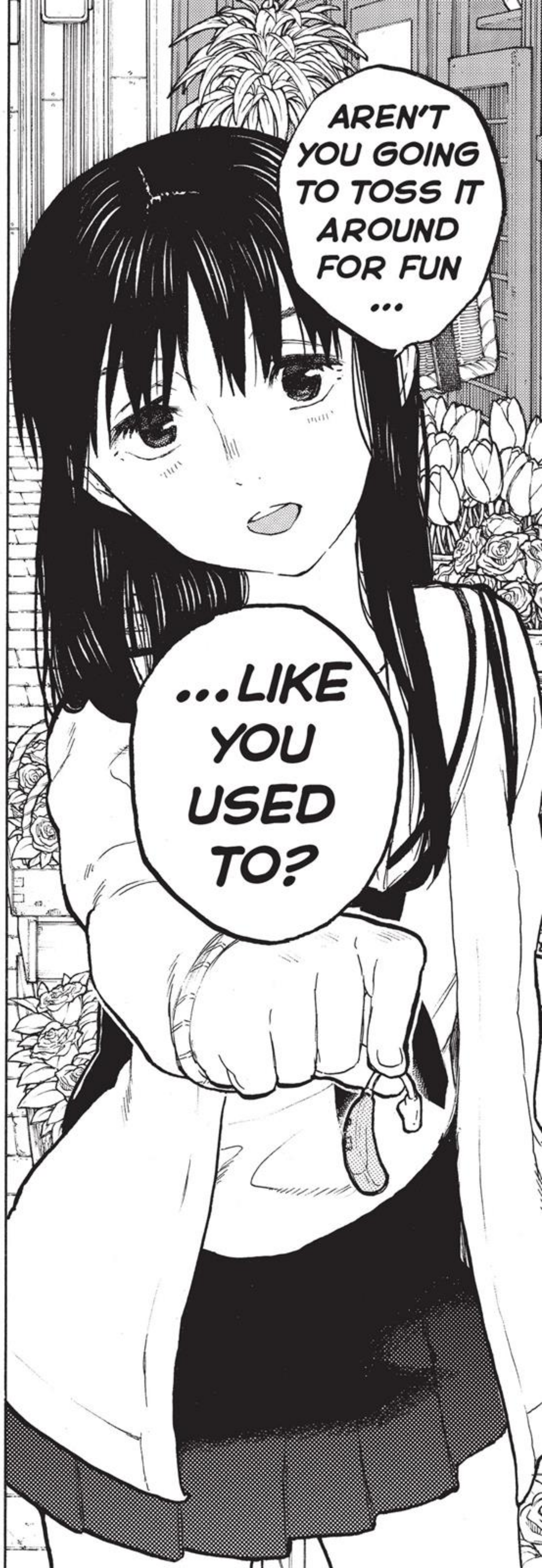
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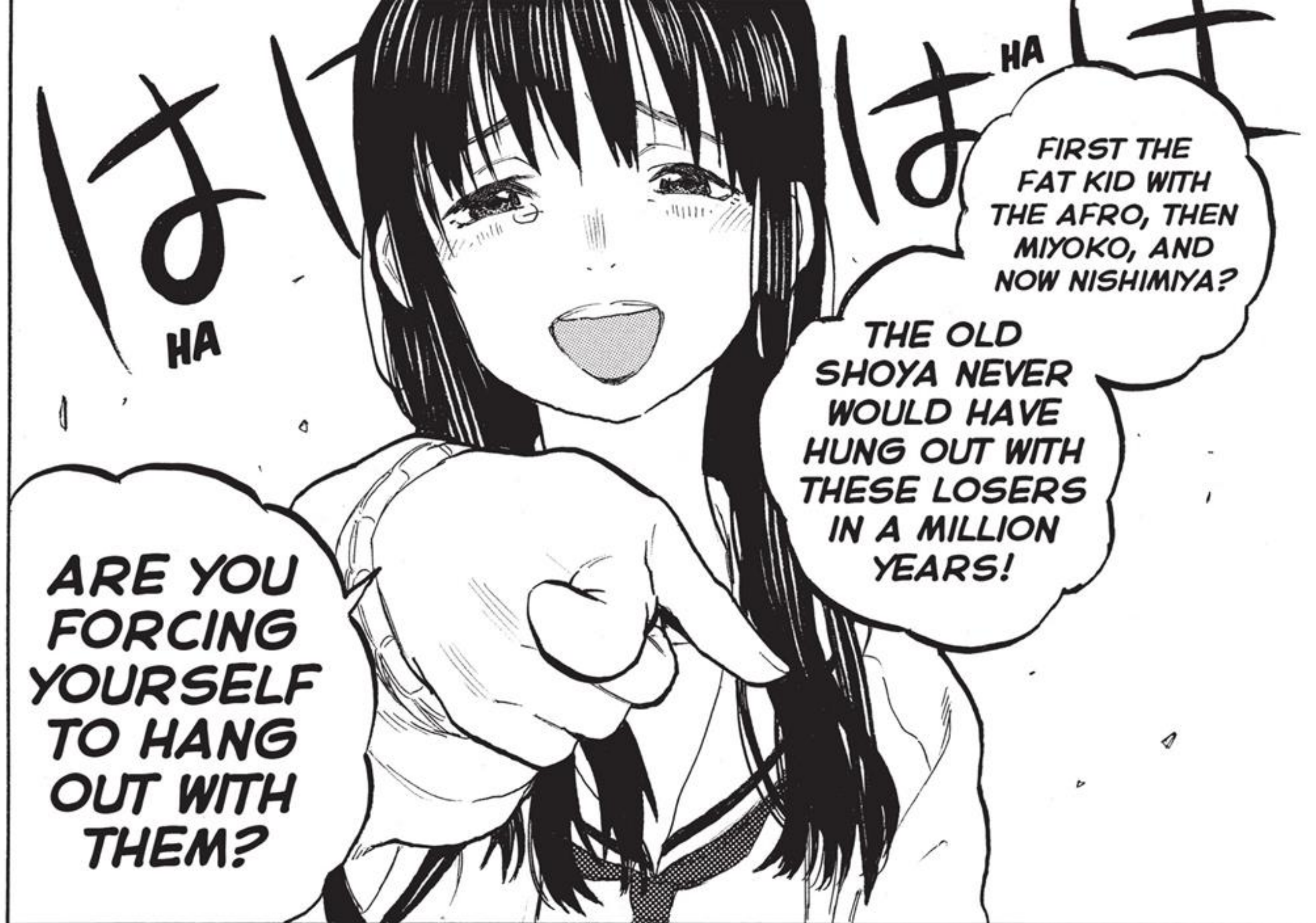


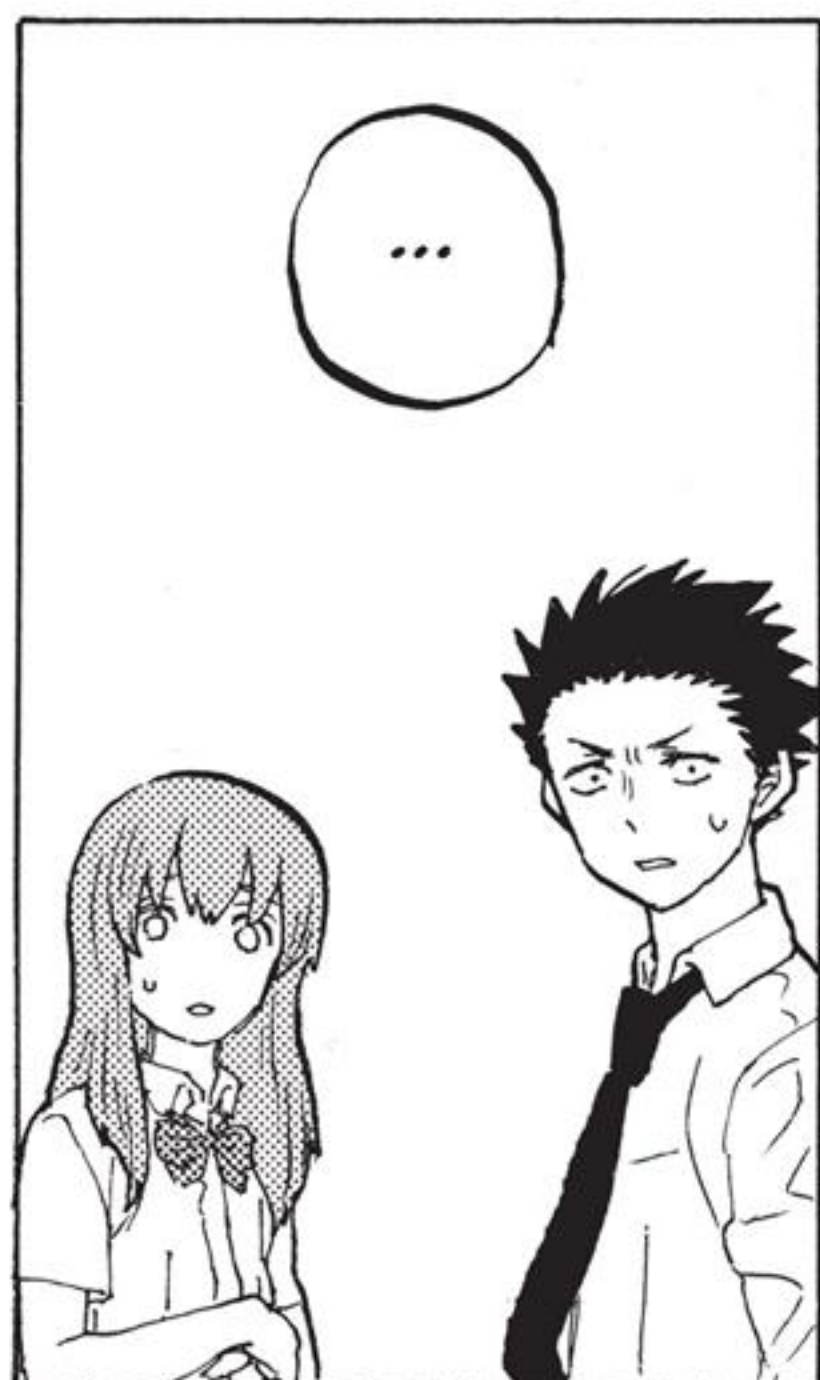


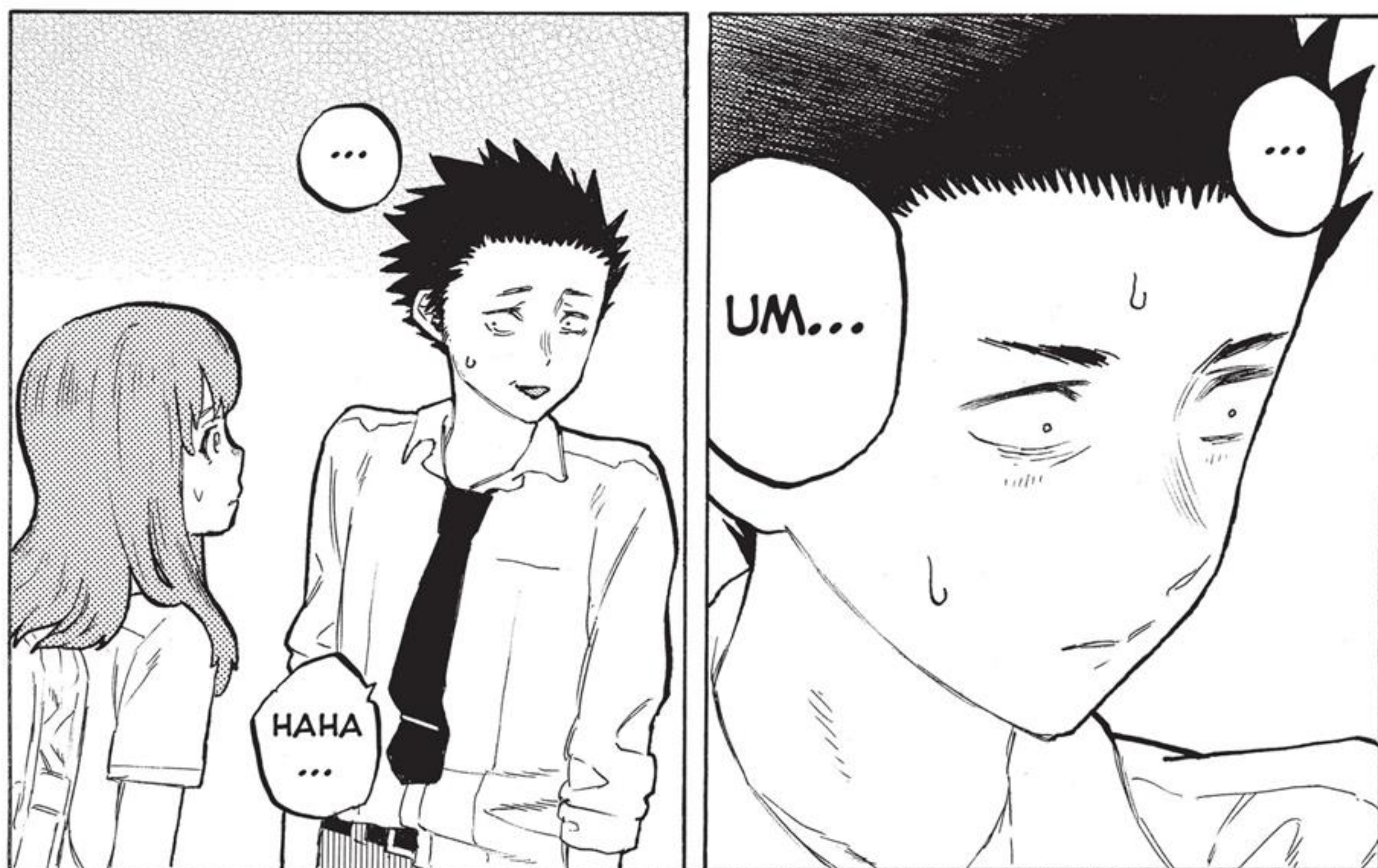


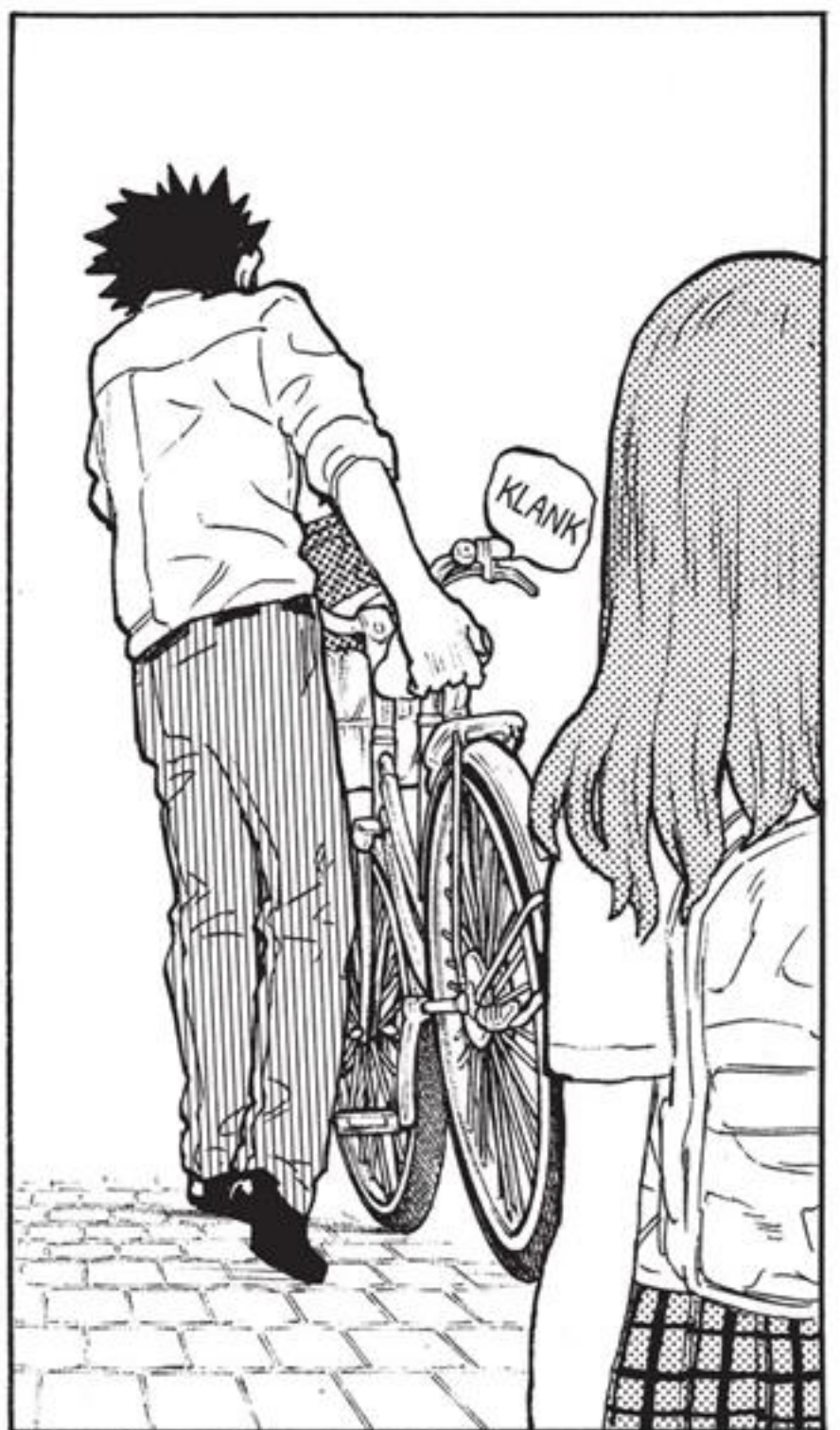














SMILE



"FORCING"?
I'M NOT
FORCING
MYSELF...
WHY WOULD
SHE SAY
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT?



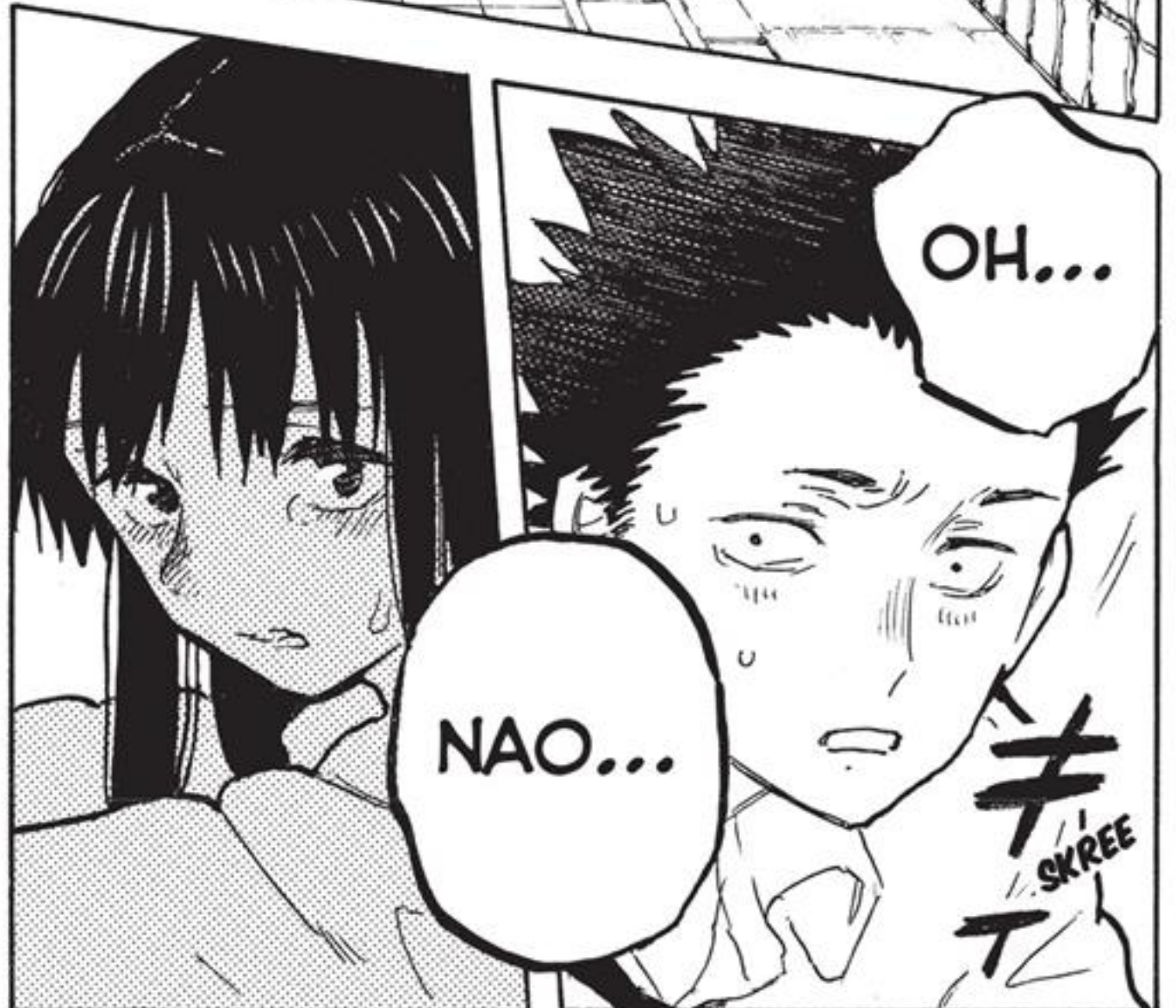
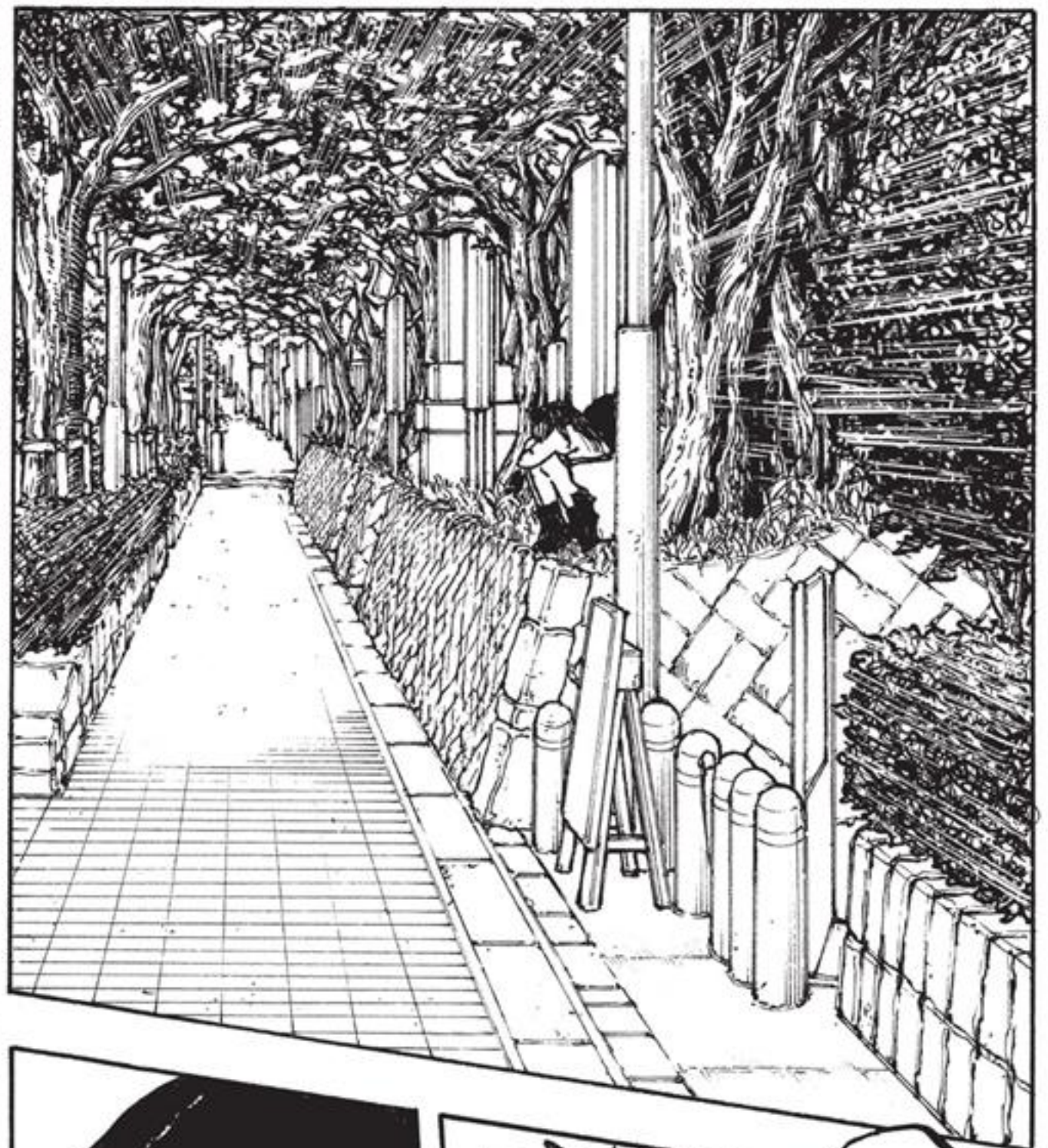
ARE YOU
FORCING
YOURSELF
TO HANG
OUT WITH
THEM?

DO I REALLY
HAVE TO
TELL HER?



YEAH...
PLUS,
IT'S NOT
LIKE IT'S
WORTH
HEARING
IN THE
FIRST
PLACE...

IT'S
JUST
GOING
TO
HURT
HER,
RIGHT?





AND,
JUST
LOOKING
AT HER
FACE
GIVES
ME A
HEADACHE...

IT'S NO USE.
THE MORE
I THINK
ABOUT IT,
THE LESS
SENSE SHE
MAKES...



...BUT
HERE I AM,
CHAUFFEURING
HER
AROUND...



I DON'T
NEED HER!
I DON'T NEED
THE PERSON
KNOWN AS
"NAOKA" IN
MY LIFE!



HOW LONG
HAVE
YOU TWO
BEEN GOING
OUT?

SO...



DIDN'T
I TELL YOU
WE'RE
ONLY
FRIENDS
?!

GOING
OUT?! IT'S
NOT LIKE
THAT!!
WE'RE
NOT!

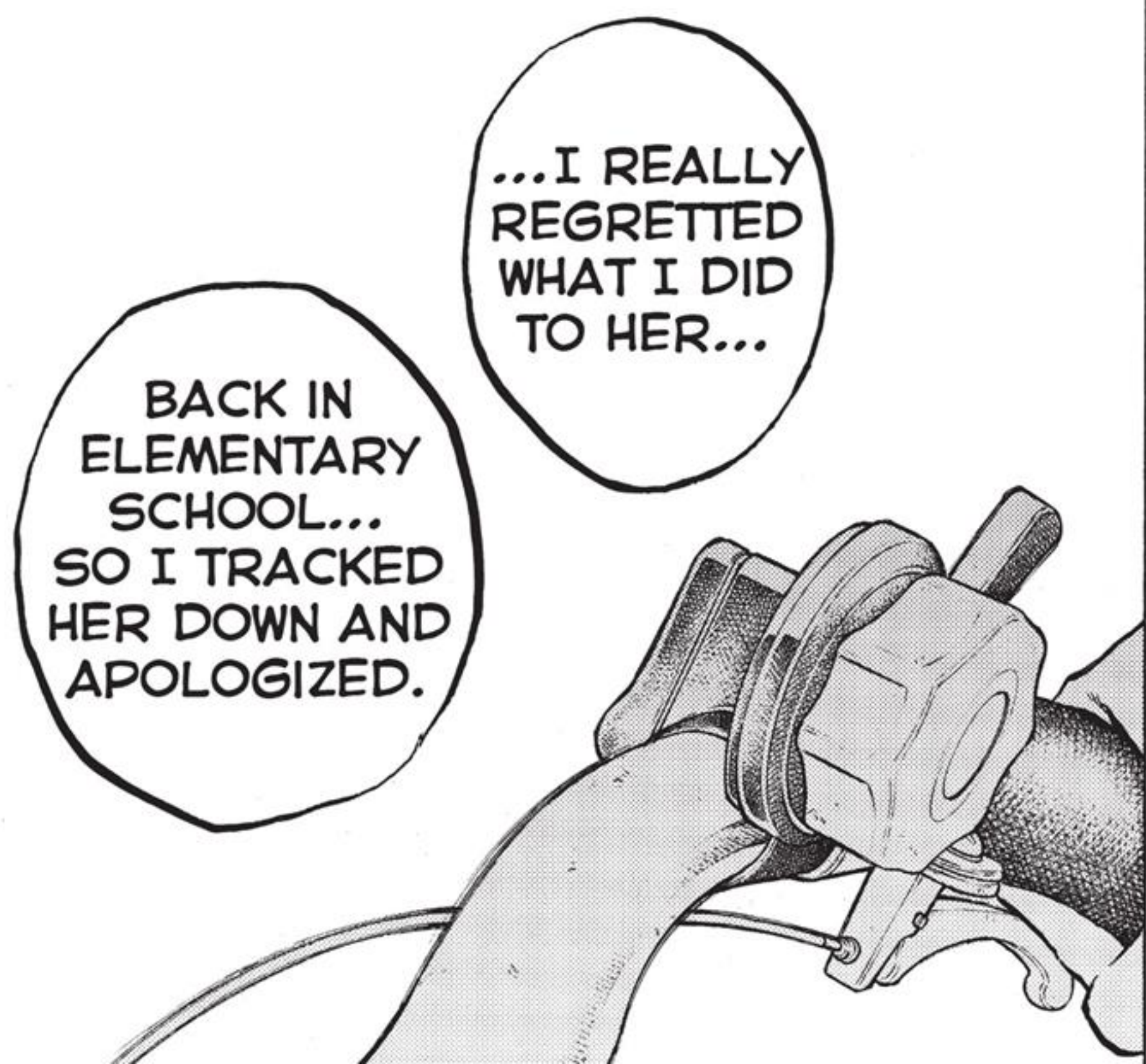
YAY,
NOW HE'S
PISSED.



HMM?

AHA... THEN
I GUESS I
CRIED FOR
NOTHING...

SO...
HOW'D YOU
TWO GET
BACK IN
TOUCH?



BACK IN
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL...
SO I TRACKED
HER DOWN AND
APOLOGIZED.

...I REALLY
REGRETTED
WHAT I DID
TO HER...











UGLY!
UGLY!
UGLY!

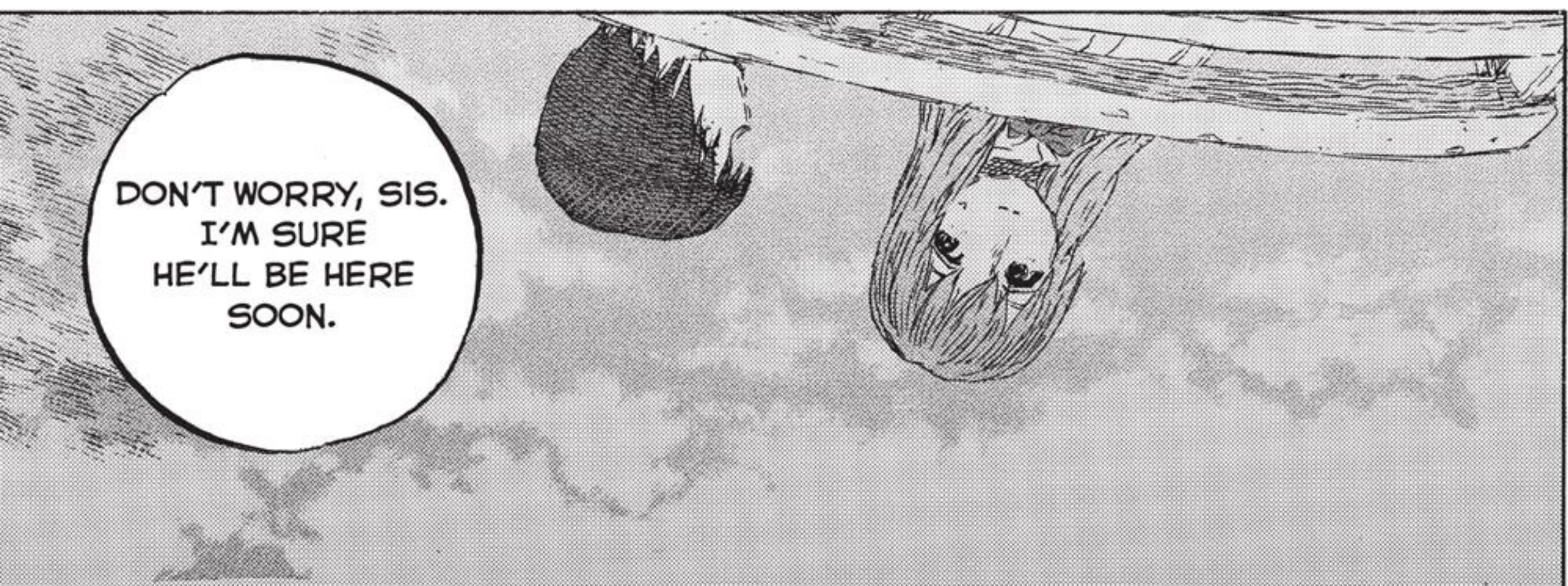
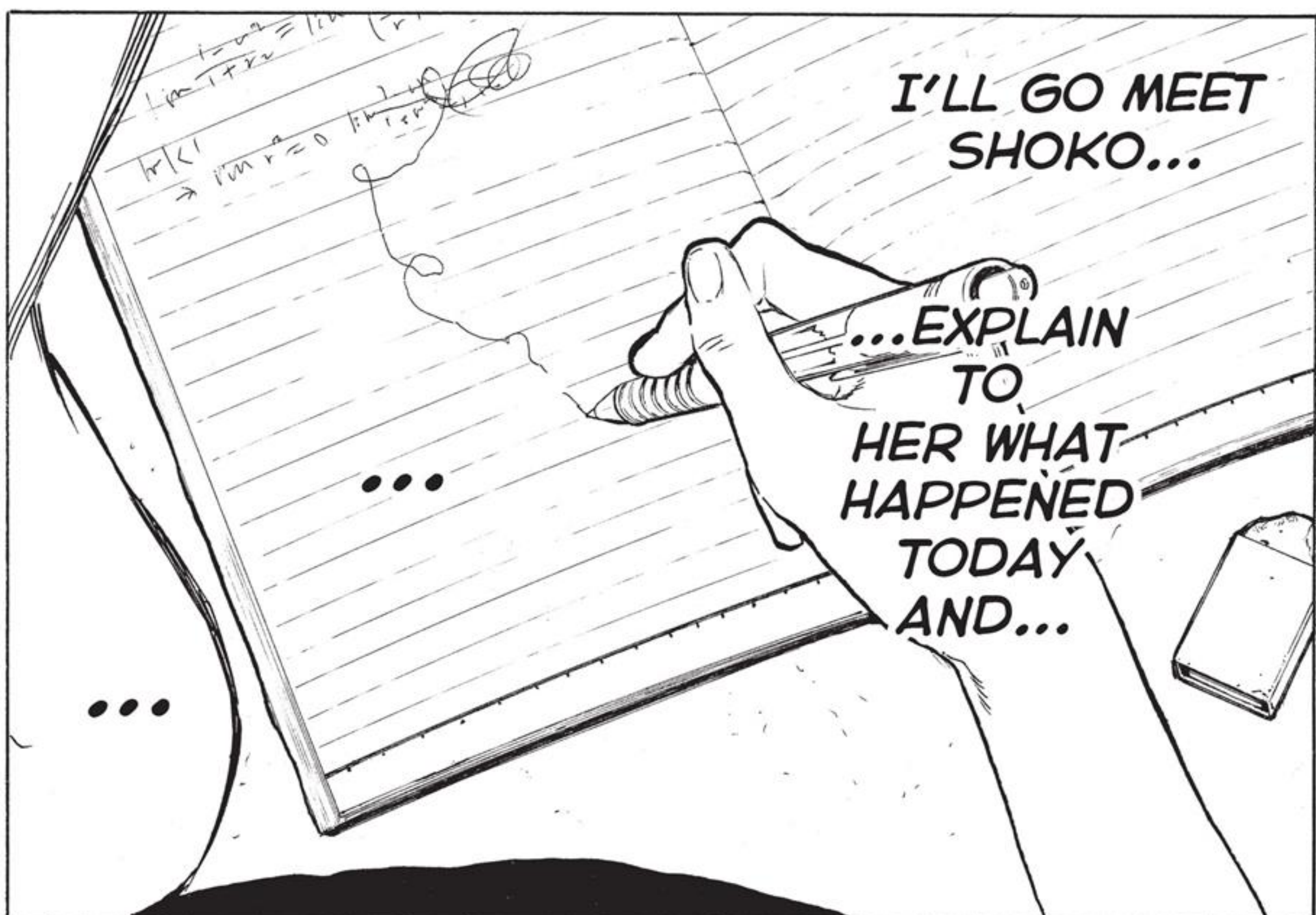
BALDY!
BALDY!
BALDY!



SEE
YOU
ROUND.

WHAT IS
HER
PROBLEM
?







DID YOU
BUY THAT
THANK YOU
PRESENT
FOR SHOYA
YESTERDAY?

OH, I
ALMOST
FORGOT!



OOH
!
HUH?



SMILE!
ニコオ!



WHAT A
WEIRD
FACE...

THAT'S
ANOTHER
NEW ONE
TO ME!